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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 000184

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ANKARA PASS TO ADANA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/30/2018
TAGS: ABLD SENV TU
SUBJECT: ANKARA'S WATER SUPPLY: SUPPLY UP QUALITY DOWN FOR
SUMMER 2008

REF: ANKARA 03046

Classified By: DALE EPPLER Per E.O. 12958 for reasons 1.4(d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Water levels in Ankara's reservoirs have risen from an approximate 15 day supply in December 2007 to an approximate 100 day supply in late January 2008. The usable water supply is still only 60% of the January 2007 level. To avoid another water shortage in summer 2008, the city of Ankara plans to draw water from the Kizilirmak river, which has higher than normal levels of chlorine, sodium and sulfates from agricultural runoff, and mix it directly with city water to reduce the contamination levels. Ankara has no water treatment facilities to remove chemical contaminants. The best case scenario remains that Ankara will have a sufficient supply, but of contaminated water in summer 2008.

¶2. (SBU) On January 29th, 2008, we visited Murat Dogru, the head of Ankara's Infrastructure Department and Chief Advisor to the Mayor of Ankara, in his office to talk about the water situation and Ankara's expectations for Summer 2008. Dogru gave us some background and capacities for the water supply and storage system for the city, similar to the information reported reftel from the State Hydrology agency. As of late January, Ankara had approximately 84 million cubic meters of water in its reservoirs, up from only approximately 10 million cubic meters in mid-December 2007. While this is a positive development, it is still just 60% of the 137 million cubic meters that Ankara had at the end of January 2007. To prevent another water crisis in summer 2008, Ankara is building a system to pipe water from the Kizilirmak River 125km to Ankara. The project, which would supply water to Ankara for the next 50 years, is projected to be finished and on-line by June 2008. While this project, if completed on time, would provide enough water to meet the city's needs, the water contains high levels of chemicals from agricultural runoff and industry.

¶3. (SBU) When asked about the contamination, Dogru showed us the webpage of the Ankara water and sewage department (ASKI) website at www.aski.gov.tr. In order to allay public fears, the city published four studies of the river water. The test results differed, but all four studies concluded that the river had high concentrations of sulfates (357 mg/l), chlorine (260 mg/l), and Sodium (213 mg/l) (all results taken from Middle Eastern Technical University study). Additionally, one of the samples in the city's study showed a high concentration of nitrates (11.2 mg/l) and the University's study, which was the only study that tested for it, showed the presence of lead (listed at